

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Previously presented): A method of evaluating compounds which are effective for treatment or prevention of obesity comprising:

(a) a step in which a test compound is contacted with a long chain fatty acyl elongase (LCE) protein in an admixture comprising a cell-extracted microsome fraction, NADPH, palmitoyl CoA, and labeled malonyl-CoA and

(b) a step in which it is confirmed whether or not said test compound inhibits the elongase activity of said LCE protein.

Claims 2-21 (Cancelled)

Claim 22 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 1 wherein at least 20 % of the LCE activity is confirmed as being inhibited.

Claim 23 (Previously presented): A method of evaluating compounds which are effective for treatment or prevention of obesity comprising:

(a) a step in which test compounds are contacted with a plurality of elongase proteins including a long chain fatty acyl elongase (LCE) in an admixture comprising a cell-extracted microsome fraction, NADPH, palmitoyl CoA, and labeled malonyl-CoA,

(b) a step in which the activities of said plurality of elongase proteins are assayed, and

(c) a step in which test compounds which inhibit the LCE activity among said plurality of elongase proteins are selected as being effective for the treatment or prevention of obesity.

Claim 24 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 23 wherein the test compounds which inhibit at least 20 % of the activity of LCE activity are selected.